"The Cow Bill"

The Livestock Encouragement Act which was passed at the recent session of the Alberta Legislature, commonly known as "The Cow Bill," is now in operation, and applications are being received at the Department of Agriculture for loans under this Act. The Act provides that any five or more farmers may avail themselves of its provisions by joining together for that purpose. These men may borrow up to $500 each. The money is loaned to them for a period of five years at 6 per cent. interest. The farmer receives the full $500 and he has nothing to pay but $30 interest once a year until the end of five years. The only expense in connection with the loan is a fee of $1 for every $100 borrowed. There is no further expense in connection with chattel mortgages or the registration of the same, as the Livestock Commissioner in the Department of Agriculture holds the cattle in security for the loan by means of a government brand. A certain amount of supervision is made over the purchase of the cattle, or rather, the farmer is given whatever assistance he may require in the purchase of his cows. The money must be used exclusively in the purchase of cows or heifers, except in case a number of members of an association wish to purchase a pure-bred bull to be used by them as an association, and then 10 per cent. of their money may be used for that purpose.

The purchaser of livestock under this Act must retain the progeny of the cows or heifers so purchased until the note is paid, except that he can sell the steers when they are two years old and use the proceeds in connection with his farming business. None of the original cows or heifers, or cows or heifers bred from them, can be sold without the written consent of the Livestock Commissioner. This consent, of course, will be given in case a farmer should require to sell any of them on account of their being non-breeders or for any other reason, replacing those sold with other cows or heifers. In this way the livestock loans will practically all be well-secured after the first crop of calves has been raised, so that there will be a comparatively small amount of risk either for the Government or for any individual member of an association.

In order to avail themselves of this loan, five farmers are asked to join together, signing joint and several notes for the money, so that in case of any man wilfully neglecting his stock there will be some interested person in the shape of another member of the syndicate to notify the Livestock Commissioner, and he, under the provisions of this Act, can take charge of the stock so neglected, and see that the other members of the syndicate as well as the Government are protected against loss.

Provision is also made in the Act for the Livestock Commissioner to proceed against the one man who so neglects his stock and compel him to pay whatever loss there is without involving the other members of the syndicate in a law suit, the idea being to work out, as simply as possible, a system by which men can borrow money at a low rate of interest for the purchase of livestock, and still have reasonable protection for the Treasury of the Province of Alberta, which guarantees these loans and thus materially reduces the rate of interest.

Already a number of applications have been received from associations, and the Livestock Commissioner is now prepared to take the matter up with any farmers who are interested in the Act. Write the Department of Agriculture, Edmonton, for information, forms of applications and copies of The Livestock Encouragement Act.—Advertisement.